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Transportation Division

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Transportation Division

Roberto Sarmiento, Chair



The Transportation Division promotes the exchange of knowledge and information in transportation, both in general or in one of its many subdivisions including air, highway, rail, and water transport, and multimodal transportation.

A Look Forward, A Look Back

The beginning of a new year has always given me the frame of mind to reflect on what was accomplished the previous year and, more important, dream and plan for the coming year.

As Chair of our Division and a fortunate member of other transportation information-related activities, I would like to share with you my reflections and hopes.

SLA

What a tumultuous 2002 Winter Meeting we walked into. The presentation and discussion of our proposed bylaws was so divisive, it took until the annual meeting and a much-edited proposal to calm the members and leadership. By the fall vote, which turned out to be a resounding approval, (the actual vote count was: 2,231 ballots submitted; 2,081 in favor; 91 against; 59 invalid), the new association bylaws give chapters and divisions the ability to revise their operating documents, making it easier to modify as local conditions dictate. We feel the entire association will benefit by operating under these new bylaws.

The 2003 Winter Meeting will present us with another emotionally charged issue: recommendation for changing the association's name. This one is going to be interesting. I look forward to these discussions and will keep you posted.

The "smallish" Los Angeles Annual Conference was of particular interest to me, not only because of the programs and activities, but also because some afternoons and evenings were punctuated by L.A. riot police going to work and adoring Lakers fans having a good time.

The New York annual meeting was a constant preoccupation. Planning the programs, contacting speakers and volunteers, and worrying about sponsors and the astronomical cost of services appear to have consumed years out of my life. From now until June, the worries will continue, but the anticipation of our programs, speakers, and the actual meeting will make everything all right. I look forward to the contingent of European librarians that will talk about European librarianship in general and transportation information specifically. I also look forward to the attendance of a Division Chair from outside the United States.

Midwestern Transportation Library Consortium (now the Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network)

In the latter part of 2002, we saw the consortium develop from a paper project to a full-fledged program with officers, guiding principles, committees, goals and objectives, a contract with OCLC to catalog thousands of unique items, and the willingness of its members to work to make it a success. In addition, we changed our name to avoid confusion and better portray what we are trying to accomplish (hope SLA learns from us!).

This year is full of possibilities and challenges for the network. We look forward to working with OCLC to catalog our records and create our transportation union catalog. We also look forward to the network's possible expansion to include libraries outside the Midwest and, down the line, the creation of a national transportation union catalog. Personally, I look forward to, in the near future, stepping back from my network responsibilities and devoting all my energies to my library.

TRIS Online

In early 2002, members of the Transportation Research Board Information Services Committee (B-0002) concluded a very successful meeting with TRB and National Transportation Library (NTL) staffers to review and prioritize enhancements to TRIS and TRIS Online. Although some of the enhancements were put into practice throughout the year, I look forward to a much-improved system in 2003.

Conferences and Meetings

Continuing the trend of the last couple of years, in addition to the annual TRB and SLA meetings, the transportation information community was fortunate to have two other conferences in 2002: the OECD Second Information and Documentation Seminar on Transportation for Central and Eastern European Countries in Kaunas, Lithuania, and the First Midwest Regional Library and Information Services Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. All these meetings demonstrated the willingness of Division members to share their knowledge to make our world a richer transportation information community. Unfortunately, TRB and SLA are the only meetings I am aware of at this time taking place in 2003.



***Don't miss SLA's
94th Annual Conference
in New York
June 7-12, 2003***

**This year's conference features three
dynamic keynote speakers.**



Madeleine Albright
Former US Secretary of State



David McCullough
Pulitzer Prize winning author



Stewart Brand
Futurist

www.sla.org/nyc2003

It's the Economy

Libraries have always worked close to their institution's budgetary edge, and 2002 proved a severe one for some of us. In my meetings and conversations with members and nonmembers throughout the year, budget reductions, travel restrictions, agency-wide cost-cutting measures, etc., were constantly repeated and referred to as a major factor of stress in our lives. Unfortunately, it appears that 2003 will bring more of the same and perhaps worse. Our NTL is up for reauthorization later this year, and some of us fear the fiscal climate in Washington may not be too healthy. Time will tell.

Division's Discussion List

What an exceptional year! We all know that our list is a great meeting place and tool for information exchange.

As list co-owner, I will share with you a little secret that is making me smile: We are experiencing a growth spurt. Every week we receive one or two new requests to join the list, from both the United States and abroad and mostly from non-Division members. What a great feeling. You are all to be congratulated for making our list such a success. Please keep it coming.

As I reflect on my accomplishments as your Chair and the honor entrusted in me, I would like to thank all Division members who volunteered their time to make the Division work. I look forward to 2003 and encourage those who have yet to share their time to join us.

Saludos,
Roberto

New Transportation Division Members December 10, 2002

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Kaleidoscope

Division member Ernest H. Robl has self-published *Understanding Intermodal: A portable primer on today's multimodal transportation equipment and systems*. Topics include containers, other specialized equipment, intermodal terminals and railroad equipment. Contains a glossary and list of resources. For ordering information see <http://www.robl.w1.com/im-bk/index.htm>.

Roger Garren, formerly with the USDOT Transportation Library, has joined the National Transportation Library. While at USDOT Library, he worked as a reference librarian in the Aviation Branch. At NTL, Roger will work in both reference and technical services. He received his MLS from Catholic University of America in October 2002. Roger can be reached at the NTL at: roger.garren@bts.gov

New Version of TRIS Available

The National Transportation Library has released version 2.7 of TRIS Online. This new version has incorporated a number of features requested by users, including the ability to limit searches by date range or a specific year. Results can now be displayed in a printer-friendly format.

TRIS Online has about 10,000 full-text links and that number is growing monthly.

The Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network, TRIS Online, the Internet and the Three-Legged Stool: Excerpts

**by Jerry Baldwin, Library Director
Minnesota Department of Transportation**

Jerry Baldwin, Mn/DOT Library Director, has written a paper, "The Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network, TRIS Online, the Internet and the Three-Legged Stool" that reports on a study of access to recently published reports in the field of transportation, both print and electronic. (The Midwest Transportation Knowledge Network [MTKN] is being created to improve access to transportation-related information.) This article comprises excerpts from that paper. The full report is available online at www.dot.state.mn.us/library/mtkn.html. For further information, please contact Jerry at jerry.baldwin@dot.state.mn.us.

Among transportation officials and practitioners, one of the most frequently requested services is electronic access to the full-text of transportation-related reports. Although there is a general assumption that a large portion of transportation-related materials are available on the Internet, few, if any, studies have been done on the topic.

Findings [from Mn/DOT's recent study] show that of 100 recently published documents selected from the TRIS database, full-text, electronic copies of 35 could easily be located on the Internet. Access to an additional 47 titles, in print, could be provided through library networks. This gives a total of 82% of these reports that could be relatively easily accessed by anyone with access to the Internet and to library services.

...for these TRIS citations, using library services alone provides access to nearly double the number of resources as would using the Internet alone (67% vs. 35%) This result is especially surprising since items readily available through library services such as journal articles and conference proceedings were excluded from the study as were AASHTO and TRB publications, only a limited number of which are accessible via the Internet. Had citations to these resources been included, the numbers would have even more strongly favored library services.

Discussion

The focus of this study is, of course, access to the full-text of transportation related information resources. The results of this study show that, for the 300 citations identified in this study, only 108,

or 36% are readily accessible in electronic format. Library or other document delivery services would be needed to access the remainder.

...more vexing for the average member of the transportation community, is searching for information resources relating to a specific topic. Since the arrival of nearly universal access to the Internet and the availability of seemingly simple to use search engines such as Google, most people, including transportation officials and practitioners, rely on these resources to locate needed information. Unfortunately few of these experts in their own disciplines will ever become skilled at locating either known resources or identifying relevant materials on the Internet.

Conclusion

The transportation community, no doubt due to its orientation towards technological solutions, seems to be enamored with the concept of digital and virtual libraries. "The real challenge of the research library lies in creating a virtual library that is as tangible and functional as our physical libraries – embracing collections, services, and expertise." (Wendy Pradt Lougee, University of Minnesota Librarian, "Digital Library News," Spring, 2003, v.3:1, <http://www.lib.umn.edu/about/dln/dlnSpring2003.pdf>)

...[the Mn/DOT] study shows that, in order to provide the information and corresponding knowledge creation the transportation community needs, it cannot rely on just a single resource. It requires increased investment in and attention to its library collections, to services such as TRIS, and to the expertise needed in contributing resources to WorldCat and assisting its members in identifying and accessing information. Collections, services and expertise constitute the three-legged stool MTKN is working to develop that will provide a stable foundation for access to transportation knowledge.

USA PATRIOT Act: Information Sources for Librarians

American Library Association and the Association of Research Libraries

Rita Evans, Reference Librarian
Institute of Transportation Studies Library
University of California, Berkeley

Both the American Library Association and the Association of Research Libraries have extensive information on their Web sites about the USA PATRIOT* Act and homeland security issues of concern to librarians. These are excellent sources of both background and practical information.

ALA's site features a section within the Office of Intellectual Freedom titled "FBI in Your Library" at <http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/fbiinyourlibrary.html>. ALA's policies, information about the USA PATRIOT Act, and links to news articles about the FBI in libraries can be found here.

For more information about the practical implications of the USA PATRIOT Act, see the ALA's "Guidelines for Librarians on the USA PATRIOT Act—What to do before, during, and after a 'knock at the door?'" (<http://www.ala.org/washoff/patstep.pdf>) It reiterates the need to consult with your local legal advisers, review and update your written policies and procedures, and train your staff so they know how to respond appropriately to law enforcement inquiries.

ALA also has a page on "Libraries and the Patriot Legislation" (<http://www.ala.org/washoff/patriot.html>) that includes resources and links.

ARL's "Anti-Terrorism Legislation, Homeland Security, and Related Issues" page (<http://www.arl.org/info/frn/other/atl.html>) contains links to information on the Homeland Security Act, access to government information, the new FBI guidelines, the USA PATRIOT Act, and responses to proposed antiterrorism efforts.

Other Sources

Mary Minow, former librarian and now a consulting attorney, has written "The USA PATRIOT Act and Patron Privacy on Library Internet Terminals" (<http://www.llrx.com/features/usapatriotact.htm>), which contains a lot of useful information in a Q&A format about topics including record keeping and the need to train staff. She also has developed a grid that shows the types of court orders, types of information, legal standards, and legal authority regarding library records under recent legislation. See "Library Records Post-Patriot Act (Federal Law)" at <http://www.llrx.com/features/libraryrecords.htm>.

Geraldine Collins of the University of North Florida has published a paper in the fall issue of the newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the Association of College and Research Libraries, titled "The USA PATRIOT Act and Florida Libraries: Are we ready to greet the law at the public services desk?" (<http://www.unf.edu/library/facrl/article10902.html>). This is a good summary of points addressed in other sources: Plan ahead, review and update policies as needed, train staff, and designate a point person to respond to inquiries.

Leigh Stewart Estabrook, professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, conducted a survey of more than 1,000 public libraries in December 2001 to determine their responses following the September 11 terrorist attacks, such as restricting patron access, reporting patron activity to the FBI, etc. Results of the survey are at <http://www.lis.uiuc.edu/gslis/research/national.pdf>. A report on and analysis of the Illinois results is published in the winter 2002 issue of *Illinois Libraries* (http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/publications/pdf_publications/illlibrary_v84_n1.pdf).

First Monday published "Libraries, the Internet and September 11" in its December 2001 issue (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue6_12/matthews/index.html). Written by Judy Matthews, librarian, and Richard Wiggins, senior information technologist, both at Michigan State University, the article looks at some specific responses by libraries and raises a number of thought-provoking questions.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation, an association dedicated to preserving digital rights, examines how the USA PATRIOT Act relates to online activities at http://www.eff.org/Privacy/Surveillance/Terrorism_militias/20011031_eff_usa_patriot_analysis.html. Librarians and systems personnel will be interested in their analysis of how law enforcement powers are expanded under the act.

You can find the full text of the USA PATRIOT Act at <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/lawsregs/patriot.pdf>.

*"USA PATRIOT" stands for "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism."